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By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

THURSDAY, *January* the 18th, 1753.

To Mr. *FITZ-ADAM.*

SIR,

IF I had inclination and ability to do the cruelleſt thing upon earth by the man I hated, I would lay him under a neceſſity of borrowing money of a friend.

YOU are to know, ſir, that I am curate of a pariſh within ten miles of town, at forty pounds per annum; that I am five and thirty years old, and that I have a wife and two children. My father, who was a clergyman of ſome note in the country, unfortunately died ſoon after I came from college, and left me maſter of ſeventeen hundred pounds. With this ſum, which I thought

thought a very great one, I came up to town, took lodgings in Leiceſter-fields, put a narrow lace upon my frock, learnt to dance of Denoyer, bought my ſhoes of Tull, my ſword of Becket, my hat of Wagner, and my ſnuff-box of Deard. In ſhort, I entered into the ſpirit of taſte, and was looked upon at public places as a faſhionable young fellow. I do not mean that I was really ſo, according to the town-acceptation of the term; for I had as great an averſion to infidelity, libertiniſm, gaming and drunkenneſs, as the moſt unfaſhionable man alive. All that my enemies, or what is more, all that my friends can ſay againſt me, is, that in my dreſs I rather imitated the coxcomb than the ſloven; that I preferred good company to reading the fathers; that I liked a dinner at the tavern better than one at a private houſe; that I was oftener at the play than at evening prayers; that I uſually went from the play to the tavern again; and that in five years time I ſpent every ſhilling of my fortune. They may alſo add, if they pleaſe, as the climax of my follies, that when I was worth nothing myſelf, I married the moſt amiable woman in the world, without a penny to her fortune, only becauſe we loved each other to diſtraction, and were miſerable aſunder.

To the whole of this charge I plead guilty; and have moſt heartily repented of every article of it, except the laſt: I am, indeed, a little apprehenſive, that my wife is my predominant paſſion, and that I ſhall carry it with me to the grave.

I had contracted an intimacy at college with a young fellow, whoſe taſte, age and inclinations were exactly ſuited to my own. Nor did this intimacy end with our ſtudies; we renewed it in town; and as our fortunes

tunes were pretty equal, and both of us our own maſters, we lodged in the ſame houſe, dreſſed in the ſame manner, followed the ſame diverſions, ſpent all we had, and were ruined together. My friend, whoſe genius was more enterprizing than mine, ſteered his courſe to the Weſt-Indies, while I entered into holy orders at home, and was ordained to the curacy above-mentioned.

AT the end of two years I married, as I told you before; and being a wit, as well as a parſon, I made a ſhift by pamphlets, poems, ſermons and ſurplice-fees, to increaſe my income to about a hundred a year.

I think I ſhall pay a compliment to my wife's œconomy, when I aſſure you, that notwithſtanding the narrowneſs of our fortune, we did not run out above ten pounds a year: for if it be conſidered that we had both been uſed to company and good living; that the largeſt part of our income was precarious, and conſequently if we ſtarved ourſelves, we were not ſure of laying up; that as an author I was vain, and as a parſon ambitious; always imagining that my wit would introduce me to the miniſter, or my orthodoxy to the biſhop; and excluſive of theſe circumſtances, if it be alſo conſidered that we were generous in our natures, and charitable to the poor, it will rather be a wonder that we ſpent ſo little.

'TIS now five years and a quarter ſince our marriage; in all which time I have been running in debt without a poſſibility of helping it. Laſt chriſtmas I took a ſurvey of my circumſtances, and had the mortification to find that I was fifty-one pounds fifteen ſhillings worſe than nothing. The uneaſineſs I felt upon this diſcovery determined me to ſit down and write a tragedy. I ſoon found

found a fable to my mind, and was making a conſiderable progreſs in the work, when I received intelligence that my old friend and companion was juſt returned from Jamaica, where he had married a planter's widow of immenſe fortune, buried her, and farmed out the eſtate ſhe had left him for two thouſand pounds a year upon the exchange of London.

I rejoiced heartily at this news, and took the firſt opportunity of paying my congratulations upou ſo happy an occaſion. As I was dreſſed for this viſit in very clean canonicals, my friend, who, poſſibly, had connected the idea of a good living with a good caſſock, received me with the utmoſt complaiſance and good-humour; and after having teſtified his joy at ſeeing me, deſired to be informed of my fortune and preferment. I gave him a particular account of all that had happened to me ſince our ſeparation; and concluded with a very blunt requeſt, that he would lend me fifty guineas to pay my debts with, and to make me the happieſt curate within the bills of mortality.

As there was ſomething curious in my friend's anſwer to this requeſt, I ſhall give it you word for word, as near as I can remember it; marking the whole ſpeech in italics, that my own interruptions may not be miſtaken.

FIFTY gnineas! And ſo you have run yourſelf in debt fifty two pounds ten ſhillings! Within a very trifle, ſir. *Ay, ay, I mean ſo. Fifty guineas is the ſum you want; and perhaps you would think it hard if I refuſed lending it.* I ſhould indeed. *I knew you would. Let me ſee.* (going to the eſcritore) *Can you change me a hundred-pound note?* Who I, ſir? You ſurprize me. *Here, John!* (enter John) *get change for a hundred-pound note. I want to lend this gentleman ſome money—Or—no, no; I ſha'nt*

want

want you. (Exit John) *I believe I have forty guineas in my pocket. You may get the other ten ſomewhere elſe. One, two, three—Ay, there are juſt forty guineas. And, pray ſir, when do you intend to pay me?* I had rather be excuſed, ſir, from taking any; I did not expect to be ſo mortified. *Extravagance, ſir, is the ſure way to mortification. I muſt deal plainly with you. He that lends his money has a right to deal plainly. You began the world with about two thouſand pounds in your pocket.*— Seventeen hundred, ſir. *And theſe ſeventeen hundred pounds, I think, laſted you about five years.* True, ſir. *Five times three are fifteen—Ay, you lived at about the rate of three hundred and fifty pounds a year. After this, as you tell me yourſelf, you turned curate; and becauſe forty pounds a year were an immenſe ſum, you very prudently fell in love, and married a beggar. Do you think, ſir, that if I had intended to marry a beggar, I ſhould have ſpent my fortune as I did? No, ſir; I married a woman of fortune, great fortune; and ſo might you—What hindered you? But I ſay nothing againſt your wife. I hope you are both heartily ſorry that you ever ſaw one another's faces. Are your children boys or girls?* Girls, ſir. *And I ſuppoſe I am to portion them? But I muſt tell you once for all, ſir, that this is the laſt ſum you muſt expect from me. I have proportioned my expences to my eſtate, and will not be made uneaſy by the extravagance of any man living. I have two thouſand a year, and I ſpend two thouſand. If you have but forty, I ſee no occaſion for your ſpending more than forty. I have a ſincere regard for you, and I think my actions have proved it; but a gentleman, who knows you very well, told me yeſterday, that you were an expenſive, thoughtleſs, extravagant young fellow.*

I know not to what length my friend would have extended his harangue; but as I had already heard enough